

To: Hanson, Mark[hanson.mark@epa.gov]
Cc: Ruiz, Adam[Ruiz.Adam@epa.gov]; Buchholz, Ken[Buchholz.Kenneth@epa.gov]; Ferguson, Doug[Ferguson.Doug@epa.gov]; Pyakuryal, Kumud[Pyakuryal.Kumud@epa.gov]
From: Doherty, Paul
Sent: Wed 11/16/2016 10:54:38 PM
Subject: RE: Hydrogen Chloride - MGP Response Story

How does the information come in?

Depends. Responsible parties are required to notify the National Response Center when they have a reportable release. Sometimes EPA is also notified directly by the RP but if not we get the call information reported to us by the NRC. The state also gets this info and we often verify that the state's have been notified with a follow-up call. In Atchison case, the RPs did not notify the NRC and EPA was reacting to news releases and third party notification we received from employees who were also watching the news. An RP notification was eventually made but I believe we did not find the notification to be timely and someone within EPA may be following up on the timing of the notification. I have no first hand info on this.

In addition to calls from the NRC, EPA man's a spill reporting line 24/7 and we receive spill notification calls directly from the state, private citizens, local officials, etc.

Who's notified, what steps are taken to ensure EPA is doing our part.

As I said, EPA notifies the state as well as EPA management and a decision is made as to whether a response, either EPA and/or the state is warranted. In the Atchison case, EPA management made the decision to send an OSC, me, to determine firsthand what was going on in the absence of any on scene reports from the RP. Depending on the situation, EPA notifications may extend to Tribal contacts, Natural Resource Trustees and others as warranted.

Had we been activated and mobilized in an emergency response such as this, what sort of support / information / abilities would we bring to the table?

We first ensure that the incident is being properly addressed. In the Atchison situation the Fire Department was in charge and the RP/Fire Department was taking proper response actions. If proper response actions are not being taken or there is no one taking responsibility for taking proper response actions then EPA can federalize the response and take the lead in conducting response actions.

What do we provide the on-scene IC that other agencies wouldn't be able to?

In the Atchison case, we provided technical air monitoring support to the IC to confirm there was no lingering trace of hydrogen chloride gas that represented threat to public health. The site also requested assistance in responding to health related questions they were receiving from concerned citizens. We put the city in touch with ATSDR to provide this technical assistance – function that was eventually assumed by a contractor for the RP, CTEH, which stood up a 24-hr hotline to handle these calls. In addition to providing this type of technical support when others are running the response, EPA can provide full response personnel and equipment to conduct cleanup if necessary.

EPA-type assistance could be provided by RP response contractors or the state National Guard Civil Support Teams but EPA activation is often quicker and easier for states and/or locals to request.

Anybody else want to chime in feel free.

Doug, please loan your face for the “glamour shot” that the reading public will demand accompany this article! I might suggest you pick up the phone (black thing on the table. Kumud will show it to you) for an “action shot”!

Good luck!

ped

From: Hanson, Mark
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2016 2:18 PM
To: Doherty, Paul <Doherty.Paul@epa.gov>

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Hey Paul –

In response to the emails between you, cody and I from last week – I’d still like to get some kind of story on this.

I realize that our mission at the Atchison incident was minimal, however I’d like to get a story drafted up on what our response actions are for situations like this.

If you could – take me through the process of what happens. How does the information come in? Who’s notified, what steps are taken to ensure EPA is doing our part. Had we been activated and mobilized in an emergency response such as this, what sort of support / information / abilities would we bring to the table? What do we provide the on-scene IC that other agencies wouldn’t be able to?

If you can help me get answers to these questions, that’ll be a start and I can send you a few more in-depth questions after that.

I think the key take-away from this story will be “yeah, our involvement was minimal, but our team was ready and prepared to bring X to the table.”

If you think anyone should be looped into this convo – I can hit them up as well for additional details.

Thanks Paul!

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